April 10, 2020
Issue #1

The Crazy Wisdom Weekly

Shining a light in the dark.

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Please read our parent publication, *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal*. You can find online archives on our website, crazywisdomjournal.com. The Crazy Wisdom Journal has been published three times a year since 1995.

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Our cover photo was taken by Moodywalk on Unsplash.

Thank you to our contributors for this issue:

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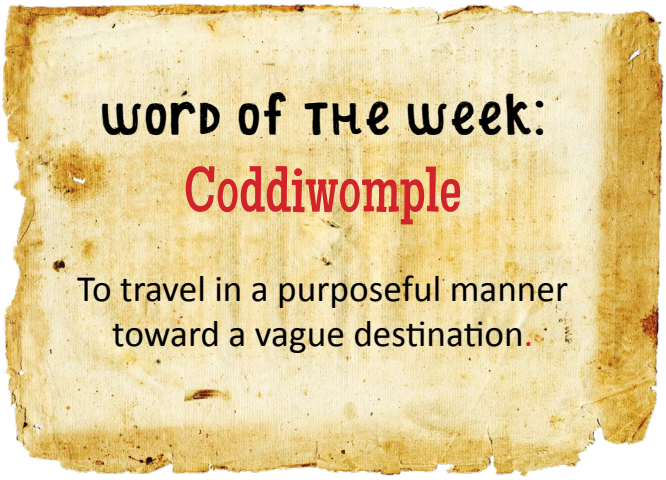

Because of Covid-19, we're not publishing our usual springtime *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* in mid-April. (We will publish it later on in the spring.) But in the meantime, we thought we'd create a weekly online version—short, and lively, and perhaps a mild distraction for our local and regional readership. We welcome articles, interviews, recipes, wisdom, personal essays, breathing exercises, favorite places for socially distant walks, news of your dogs, whatever. Send your submission to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.

The Crazy Wisdom Weekly

A Letter From the Editor

These are trying times we are living in right now, but I like to remember each day that "this too shall pass." The wonderful early spring sunshine and mild temperatures are helping me keep my sanity. Having something to work on and toward has also helped me feel more "normal." I wake up each morning excited to get to work—much to my husband's chagrin. He's not a morning person.

Life for me hasn't changed too much—I've worked from home for the past two years but, there have been some really nice small changes that are great. The first few that come to mind are: I don't have to fight with my youngest to get up for school (he's not a morning person either). I have help making dinner because only one of my children still living at home is an essential worker. And, I feel more free—it's like I have more time in my day because I don't have appointments that I have to show up for, or errands that need to be run. I don't have to drive to school or music lessons. I've been spending the time that I used to spend curling my hair to practice my guitar—my music skills are improving, and I'm giving my hair a break from the heat damage!

I find that a little humor injected into life helps immensely when the quarantine blues settle around our shoulders. Find a silly movie (even if you've seen it a million times!), sing out loud, dance in the kitchen, make cookies, go outside and play!

Instead of brooding about what you can't do, revel in what you can do—all the things you wished you had time for when you were running your kid to baseball five times a week, or sitting in a seemingly never-ending work meeting.

One of my favorite lines from the Harry Potter series is "Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times if one only remembers to turn on the light." That's why I chose the theme of "shining a light in the dark" for this new weekly e-zine. I wanted to share with you, our dear readers, things that brings us joy, that make us lighter, that spark our imagination. I hope you find something in our pages that switches on the light in your dark room.

Jennifer Carson

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5 QUESTIONS FOR Will Cares

1. When did you know you were an artist?

I guess I have known since I was in elementary school. I had great art teachers all through the Ann Arbor Public Schools. But my first art teacher was at Pittsfield Elementary, Mrs. Carol Tice, who made all of us feel like we were "real" artists.

I was lucky to have all kinds of materials at home, as well. My mother was a Kindergarten teacher and my father was getting his PH.D in Higher Education at the University of Michigan. Both of my parents gave me the space to take my creative work seriously from a very young age.

"The Temptation of Glitz", 2020, found wood frame, denim, tacks, found frame corners, acrylic

2. What was the biggest roadblock you faced to becoming an artist?

Making art has always been a joy for me, but making a living doing so has proved to be a much more difficult task. I got both a BFA and an MFA in Fine Art and then soon realized I needed a "Plan B," so that I could have health insurance, a livable wage, and be able to support a family!

3. What inspires your work?

In my work I am seeking the spiritual in the material. I use salvaged materials that have been altered to create my work. These pieces explore how the objects in our everyday lives serve us, signifying social status (or the lack of it), and often reference the missing human body.

I don't do much planning. I prefer to work more intuitively, letting the materials speak to me and to hint at a working method. Recently, I have been interested in the idea of repurposing my own older work, in much the way that I have worked with salvaged materials that have their own history and cultural/social resonances. I call these works "Collaboration With Myself"—they are an ongoing series. The works come from the materials—their colors, shape, and forms—how they drape, what the objects themselves suggests as a way to combine them into something new and other. Since I am trained as both a painter and a sculptor, I am drawn to thinking about the history of both disciplines, and this comes out

"Memory and Imagination", 2020, acrylic over propane torch drawing, on found plywood

in the kinds of works I make. Recent pieces are hard to precisely categorize since they partake of the materiality and concern with forms that we associate with sculpture as well as the pictorial nature of painting.

4. What is your dream project?

It's really more of a dream opportunity. One day, I would love to have a solo show at a reputable gallery! It's much harder than most people would believe to make this happen.

5. Do you make a living on your art, or do you have a day job? If you have a day job, what is it?

I don't know too many full-time professional artists! No, I have been an elementary art teacher in the Dearborn Public Schools for the past nineteen years. It is a pretty great (though crazy) job working with over four hundred kids a week! They certainly keep me active, although currently we are all learning how to learn (and "teach") remotely.

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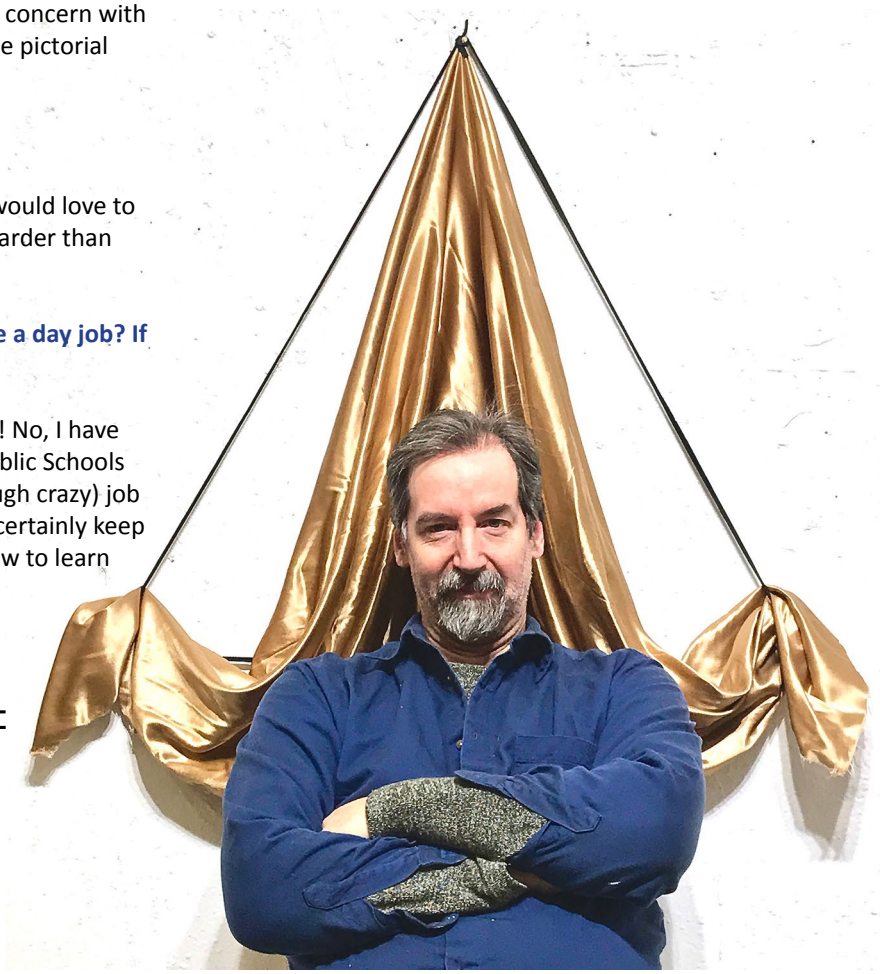
*Will Cares (b.1964) is an artist living in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His works have been exhibited throughout the state. He holds an MFA from Wayne State University and is a member of Ypsi Alloy Studios in Ypsilanti, MI.*Watch a short video documentary about Will and his work online.



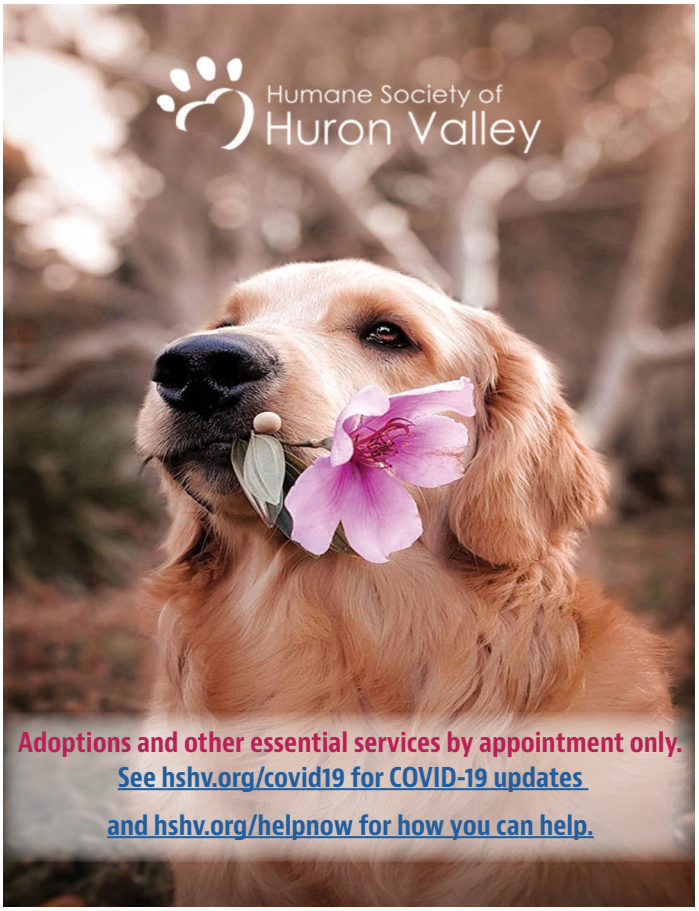
The Artist with "Classical Seduction", 2020, found textile, leather laces, nails.

Amber

Throughout history amber has had many uses by many different cultures. On its surface it is a tree resin that has been fossilized, not an actual gemstone. Despite that, amber is prized for its beautiful color—and sometimes, even in the fact that the remains of curious insects have been frozen in time in its golden trap—and for the reason that it is very ancient, and therefore holds ancient and immeasurable energy.

Amber actually possesses an electromagnetic quality. Greek philosopher Aristophanes observed that a piece of amber after being rubbed with a piece of fur had the ability to attract small items like feathers (through a static charge via friction). For a long while (about 2000 years) this observation remained a mystery until the mid-seventeenth century when Dr. William Gilbert was studying the reactions of amber and magnets and the word 'electric" was first recorded in his theory of magnetism.

Because of amber's power of attraction, it is associated with the accumulation of wealth and even nicknamed the stone of manifestation.


Humane Society of
Huron Valley
Adoptions and other essential services by appointment only.
See hshv.org/covid19 for COVID-19 updates
and hshv.org/helpnow for how you can help.

Because of amber's power of attraction, it is associated with the accumulation of wealth and even nicknamed the stone of manifestation. Amber is a powerful stone that can help you increase wealth in all forms, not just monetary, and is also known to help you feel determined, confident, and courageous.

Though most of us are familiar with the warm hues of honey-colored amber, there are actually over 300 different colors—including a rare blue amber found in the Dominican Republic.

Baltic amber contains succinite, which has been used in Europe as a natural antibiotic for centuries

Amber draws negative energies and diseases away from the body and is known to absorb pain and alleviate stress. So how can we use amber to get the most out of its healing properties?

Baltic amber contains succinite, which has been used in Europe as a natural antibiotic for centuries. It is also a powerful antioxidant that helps ward off toxic free radicals and disruption of the cardiac rhythm. It also stimulates neural system recovery, bolsters the immune system, improves concentration and awareness, as well as reduces stress.

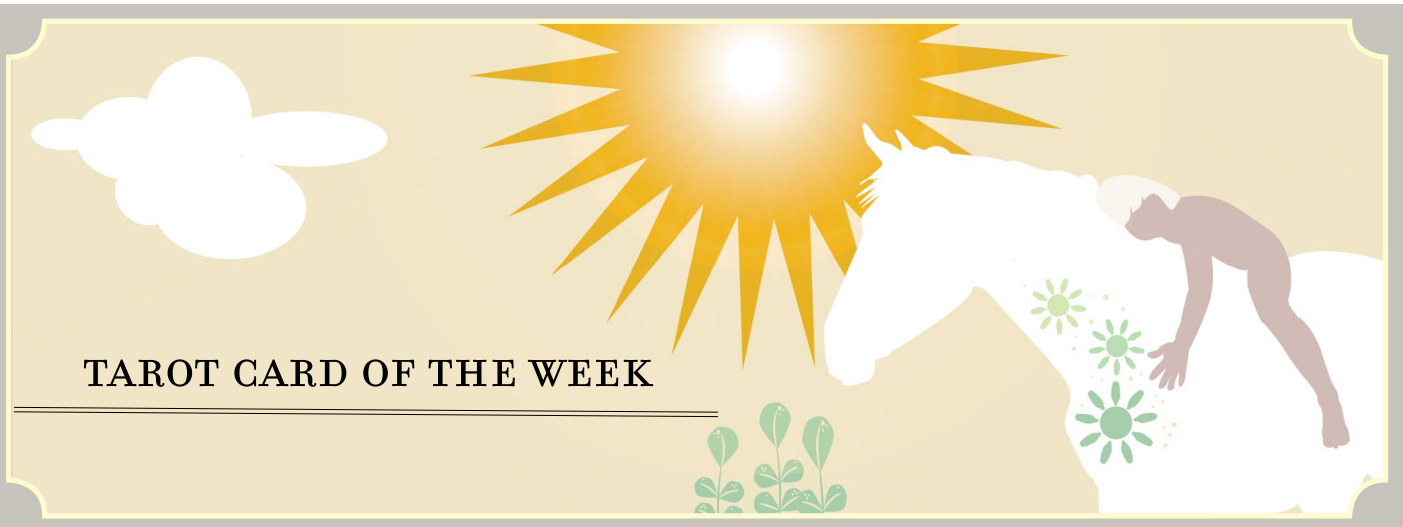
Amber oil permeates your skin quickly and penetrates deep into tissues. It improves circulation and eases muscle discomfort, making it a nice choice for massage.

Amber powder, chips, and stones can be burned to improve air quality. You can use a modern diffuser with amber oil to get the amber vapors into the air, or a standard candle aroma diffuser and place amber chips into the top bowl.

Medicines have also historically been made from amber powder. In Chinese medicine, amber is ground into a powder and combined with a warm liquid for ease in taking. It is said to have virtually no taste. Used externally it is effective in treating ulcers, boils, and other swellings.

It is thought that when wearing amber jewelry against the skin that the succinite leeches into the body, and in this way amber shares its healing properties with the wearer.

Want to learn more about amber?
Check out this book at Crazy Wisdom.



TAROT CARD OF THE WEEK

The sun card represents the light after a time of darkness. As the source of life on our planet, the sun represents life energy. The naked child symbolizes innocence and joyfulness—the happiness that blossoms when we align with our true self, her nakedness means that she has nothing to hide, or purity. Purity is emphasized through the white horse she is riding as well. The horse can also be seen as a representation of strength and nobility.

The sun card in the upright position can denote success, personal fulfillment, providing others with inspiration and joy, abundance and radiance. A warm energy and zest for life is your gift to others and is one of the traits that draws people to you.

The reversed sun card can imply that you might have trouble finding the positive in certain situations. The clouds may symbolize that your way forward is blocked, the light and warmth needed to proceed is not reaching you. This could be preventing you from having confidence and you may have setbacks that will lower your natural optimism and passion. Take these things into account in order to ensure that you are on the right track and your successes will grow and continue.

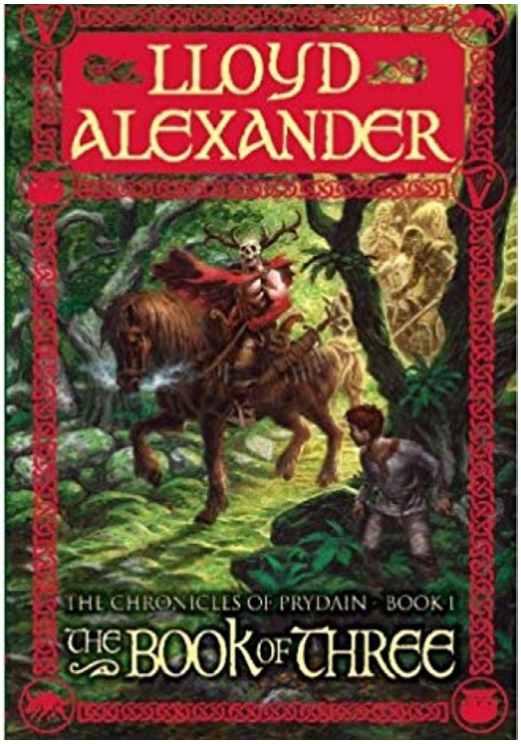
To learn more about the sun card, visit Labyrinthos online.

Crazy Wisdom Book Pick of the Week

This week's book pick of the weeek is from Crysta Coburn, a *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* staff writer and proofreader.

The Book of Three by Lloyd Alexander

I read this for the first time probably around fifth grade. A few kids were reading *Lord of the Rings*, but I just couldn't get into it at that time. I loved *The Chronicles of Narnia*, so my brother gave me a collected edition of *The Prydain Chronicles*, which starts with *The Book of Three*. (If you are familiar with Disney's *The Black Cauldron*, then you are already aware of book two in this series.) I devoured these books like no others. It was easy to relate to these younger characters, and their emotional journey took me to highest heights and lowest pits. And I learned a bit of Welsh folklore along the way! I would not call these kids books, but they are appropriate for younger readers. If you or your children enjoyed Narnia, Harry Potter, or Rick Riordan's universe, I highly recommend Lloyd Alexander's Prydain.



You can purchase this book through Crazy Wisdom's online shop.
Click here to purchase your own copy of The Book of Three.

Coronavirus

Musings and Memories

By Sandor Slomovits

Lately I've had more time to think than usual—especially when I wake in the middle of nights and can't fall back asleep. In those long dark hours, among the fears and worries, memories have surfaced that I've not had reason to recall for many years—memories that seem surprisingly relevant, and even comforting, today.

This one is possibly my very first memory. I can't think of one that is older. When I was about two or three years old I contracted scarlet fever. This was in 1951-52 and the standard practice in those days, at least in my native Budapest, was either to quarantine whole families or, as happened in my case, if complications developed, individuals were quarantined in hospitals.

The memory is of something that happened sometime after I was quarantined in a hospital room. I was not allowed out and my parents and brother were not allowed in. I remember standing by the room's window and the three of them waving to me from the other side. They had brought me a toy fire truck to ease the pain of separation, and a nurse brought it in to me. I raised the firetruck above my head and shouted, "Are you coming in?" When they sadly shook their heads from side to side, I slammed the truck to the floor as hard as I could, breaking it.

Fortunately, these days I'm finding it much easier to understand and accept the need for the current shelter-in-place orders. I wish the same for all of us. I also like to think I've mastered my temper a little bit better since that time. I wish that too for all of us.

I was seven years old when the Hungarian Revolution began on October 23, 1956 and lasted for a little over two weeks. It was dangerous to be outside as guerilla fighting erupted in the streets of Budapest when Russian soldiers attempted to put down the Revolution. Our family lived in the heart of the city, in a typical European style three-story apartment building that surrounded a courtyard. My brother and I, along with all the kids in the building, replicated the real conflicts that raged outside with mock battles of our own in the courtyard and along the interior balconies of the building. When we chose sides for our skirmishes, no one wanted to be the Russian soldiers, or the hated Hungarian secret police. Then, a citywide curfew was imposed. No one was allowed outside. In those pre-refrigerator days, my mother was used to shopping nearly every day for fresh food at nearby markets. After a few days of the curfew, our small ice box was running low on meat, fresh fruits and vegetables.

One of my father's sisters also lived in Budapest. Her husband, our uncle Ervin, was a born and bred rebel, an outlaw, a maverick. He always carried himself with a nonconformist bravado; rules and restrictions were for others, not for him. In post WWII Communist Hungary, where entrepreneurs were nearly non-existent, he owned an electronics repair shop. In a country where private automobiles and even motorcycles were rare and mostly owned by wealthy government officials, he had both and, using his thorough familiarity with all the ins and outs of the flourishing black-market economy, managed to always find petrol for each. (Both my brother and I still remember thrilling rides in the sidecar of his motorcycle, especially when he took sharp turns at exhilarating speeds that made us glad our parents weren't along.) Through his black-market contacts, he also found ways to acquire everything from chocolate to ladies' nylons, all extremely rare commodities in 1950s Hungary. No curfew or Revolution was going to change his modus operandi. He somehow got hold of a Russian Army uniform, likely stolen off the body of a dead soldier, and rode his motorcycle through the city at night, avoiding checkpoints by learning their locations through his shortwave radio contacts, and brought food to us and other members of his family. He only knew a handful of Russian words and surely would have been immediately shot, had he been caught.

If he were alive today, Ervin would undoubtedly be one of the people selflessly delivering food and medicine to family, neighbors and friends, and would also know how to find hand sanitizer, masks, and yes, even toilet paper!

Early this morning I went to Arbor Farms Market to shop for groceries. I wore glasses, a red bandana, outlaw style, underneath a dust mask like the kind I use in my shop when I sand wood. I wore gloves and sanitized my cart with alcohol cleaner the store provided. I carefully avoided coming closer than six feet to anyone in the store till I got to the checkout line. The young woman who rang up my purchases wore gloves and helped me bag my groceries. I got choked up as I thanked her and walked out of the store. Ever since this crisis began, I've frequently thought with enormous gratitude of the many, many people today who are taking far greater risks than I need to in order to serve and help others.

YoGA
Pose of the Week

Wide-footed Forward Fold

By Katie Hoener

Wide-footed forward fold is an excellent posture in times of stress, and there are loads of options. Take the feet out wider than the hips, how far is up to you! With a long spine, reaching energetically through the crown of the head, and feeling the weight in the heels, start to hinge at the hips. It can be nice to stop halfway and assess. Do we want to heel-toe the feet further or closer to the body? If we want to let the upper half of the body dangle we can, hands can come toward the earth, to the hips, the feet, or inner lace behind the back as seen here. Take what works, leave the rest. Stay for as long as feels good.

Inversions help soothe the nervous system and reset the body. This may be helpful to us now, even for a few breaths, whether in your backyard, or at your place of work. When ready to straighten up, engage the glutes and think about being long through the spine. Bring the legs back toward one another and breathe!

Inhale the future, exhale the past.

From Our Blog

How To Clean Out Your Closet: What To Ditch And What To Keep

By Andrea Zaghi

Game time: One by one, ask yourself hard questions about each piece of clothing. Be true to yourself, think of this as a chance to make space.

Is this item in good form? If it's ripped, worn, or has a broken zipper *(AND it is not worth fixing it), toss it aside.

Have I worn it in the past year? No? Please get rid of it.

Is this my style? Stop hanging onto items that don't reflect your style.

Do I feel comfortable with it? Only wear outfits that make you feel secure and confident. It makes a big difference.

Clean - Spruce up the empty spaces. And now you are left with a pile of clothes you don't want anymore. Please don't wait to get rid of them or you will feel the temptation to go through them once more. Organize the discarded things into three categories: toss, sell, or donate.

Toss - Recycle anything you can. For example, old t-shirts can be used as kitchen towels or as rags.

Sell- If you have pieces that you spent a lot on, put them aside to sell on eBay, Facebook market, or Nextdoor.

Donate- Lastly, give your other garments a new lease on life by donating them at the Salvation Army. Before I left the Netherlands in 2016, during my leaving party I hung all the discarded clothes out in the garden for my guests to take. It was a lot of fun, and people were grateful for new additions to their wardrobes.

Restructure - It is time to put everything back in place. But that is a whole new story.

Purging is not fun, but necessary. Feel free to contact me if you need more tips and tricks or a minimalistic friend to help you clean out your closet!

Read the full blog on the Crazy Wisdom Journal website.

A MANTRA FOR STRENGTH

By Laura K. Cowan, meditation coach at Great Lakes Healing Arts

We have all been through challenges before, so today's mantra is a reminder that every single one of your ancestors were the survivors and so are you. You have been through hard times before, and you've survived every single day of your life so far. Have faith in your strength to get through this. Here's the mantra:

"I was strong enough for that, I'm strong enough for this."

Repeat that a few times, take a deep breath, close your eyes, and put your hands on your heart. Feel it beating. Your heart is working hard for you today. Give yourself a little love. You're doing your best, and it's going to be okay, even if things are not going your way. Even if there's grief or fear. Your feelings are legitimate, but so is your strength. Take a minute, repeat the mantra again. "I was strong enough for that, I'm strong enough for this."

Take another deep breath, and then remind yourself, "Even when it's not okay, I can be okay." You got this. Keep fighting.

You can find more guided relaxation meditations and resources at greatlakeshealingarts.com.

Local Music Online Concerts!

Many local musicians are performing live on Facebook or on their websites. Local folk music group, Gemini, is offering music every weekday at 5 pm from their Facebook page. Drop in for a good time! Donations are being accepted and profits are being shared with local charities. For more information visit them online at geminichildrensmusic.com.

They will be alternating between solo and duo shows:

- Mondays: San and Emily — Children's show
- Tuesdays: Laz — Grown-Ups' Show
- Wednesdays: Emily — Grown-Ups' Show
- Thursdays: Laz — Children's Show
- Fridays: San and Emily — Grown-Ups' Show.

Children are always welcome at the Grown-Ups' shows — and grown-ups are welcome at the Children's shows! And, of course, if you can't watch at 5PM on any given day, the shows will stay up on our Facebook page, and you can watch them at any time.

COMFORT FOOD

by Angela Madaras

Baked Mac N' Cheese

Time: 1 hour 40 minutes
Serves 6-8

I used to eat boxed macaroni and cheese that you can buy at any store. The kind with yellow sauce mix in a box of elbow macaroni that just needs butter and milk and it is done in 10 minutes. This recipe is an adult version and is baked slow while you take care of other food preparation or dance around your kitchen celebrating the fact you are going to be face planting into a bowl of creamy goodness.

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 cup large curd cottage cheese or ricotta cheese (whole fat)
2 cups of whole milk or half and half, or any vegan milk you might have on hand
1 ¼ pound grated sharp cheddar or any cheese that melts easily
1 teaspoon dry mustard
½ teaspoon sea salt
½ teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground
2 pinches cayenne pepper
2 pinches ground nutmeg
1 pinch cinnamon

Turn oven on 450 degrees and place a 9-inch baking pan in the center with 1 tablespoon of butter. Allow it to melt, which takes about six minutes. Then pour 1 pound elbow or any small pasta into the pan and set aside.

Place all ingredients into your blender and turn into a creamy blend, almost smoothie like.

Pour this mixture over the pasta, blend with a wooden spoon, and place into oven covered for 30 minutes. Then take off cover, stir pasta well and bake another 30 minutes. For the final 10 minute baking, add Mrs. Dash or Spike seasoning blend or any seasoning you prefer just to adorn the top crust. Feel free to add more cheese and or milk if it seems a bit dry. I like sprinkling spice paprika or smoked paprika on top of mine at serving.

Be creative and add some vegetables or try unusual cheeses like feta, blue, gruyere, or goat cheese. Add protein like canned tuna, ground meat, or baked chicken. I sometimes add pesto or roasted red peppers for color. Macaroni and cheese is a great side dish or a full meal with additional protein added. Have fun and let the kids, partners, and friends chip in or make individual casseroles in smaller ramekins so each person can make their own combination. For those who are vegan: try using pureed butternut squash, almond milk, and cashew butter. This recipe can be frozen for later meals.

Ginger Miso Beef and Spinach Sauté

Time: 30 minutes or less
Serves: 3-4

1 pound stew cut beef at one inch diameter
2 inch peeled and matchstick sliced fresh ginger root (or a tablespoon of ground)
1-2 cloves chopped garlic
1 tablespoon sweet white miso
3 teaspoons honey or 2 teaspoons brown sugar
1 pound fresh or frozen (but thawed and drained) spinach. Use any greens you have available

Warm a large non-stick or cast iron skillet up to medium heat on the stove and add enough oil or fat to coat the entire pan well. Add the ginger sticks to the pan and crisp for about 5 minutes while stirring. The ginger should be golden and crisp—but not burned. Mix the meat with the garlic, miso, and honey to cover all sides. Take the ginger out of the pan and set aside. Add meat and more oil if needed. Stir fry for 4-5 minutes for medium rare, then add greens and ginger. Keep stirring, but cover the pot for 1 minute while you set out plates. Now turn off the heat and serve the macaroni and cheese on the plate with the hot "out of the pan" meat and vegetables. I like to garnish with fresh greens and pickled ginger or kim chi. I also like chopped green onion and you may also have spicy chili sauce available for those who prefer heat.

Chop Sticks are best for this dish and makes it fun for kiddos and adults alike. Consider using another grain or pasta, even sweet potatoes. During times of being home for long periods we must be flexible and creative. Udon or soba noodles would be best served in a large bowl with a little miso broth. Same goes with rice.

This dish tastes really good with a cup of hot jasmine tea. Remember to chew slowly and with full attention and gratitude for all the blessings before you. Smell each scent and take in all various flavors which make your taste buds jump for joy while your soul is nurtured and comforted.

Observations in a Time of Pandemic

(two and a half weeks in)

By Mary Anne Perrone

Some of us are having trouble sleeping
especially at first and especially
first-responders on the front lines of this
crisis.
Others are sleeping more than ever,
and even, eventually, better than ever.
New habits? Or an easing of something?

Whole families out walking,
a parent or so with two or three kids, often including a teen,
galumphing along
(unaccustomed of late to such outings),
the family dog offering focus and frolic.
Everyone passing each other, wondering
what, exactly, 6 feet apart actually looks like.

Much less traffic, more
sidewalk chalk renderings,
at least one from a teacher in front of a house
full of children,
naming each of them and saying
she misses them.

A ghostly downtown, shuttered and quiet,
like Sundays used to feel when we were kids.
One candy & ice cream store surprisingly open
("We're a grocery"),
offering scoops prepared as if by a surgeon
not for the sculpting but because of the
mask and gloves.
One person at a time welcome to enter
the shop,
a duly essential service.

Inside,
besides sleep,
are the screens that offer connections of all sorts.
Basic communication
but also zooming
into each other's living rooms and lives
with cocktail parties of scattered heirloom friends,
grandmas playing Simon Says with grandchildren many
miles away, and meetings and
webinars of every bent.

Yeast is a hot commodity,
grocery store shelves emptying as
soon as they're stocked.
Someone must be baking
or thinking about it or hoping to
return to older habits of the hearth,
long ago fallen away to the crush of busy-ness
and no time
even for the essentials of our daily bread.

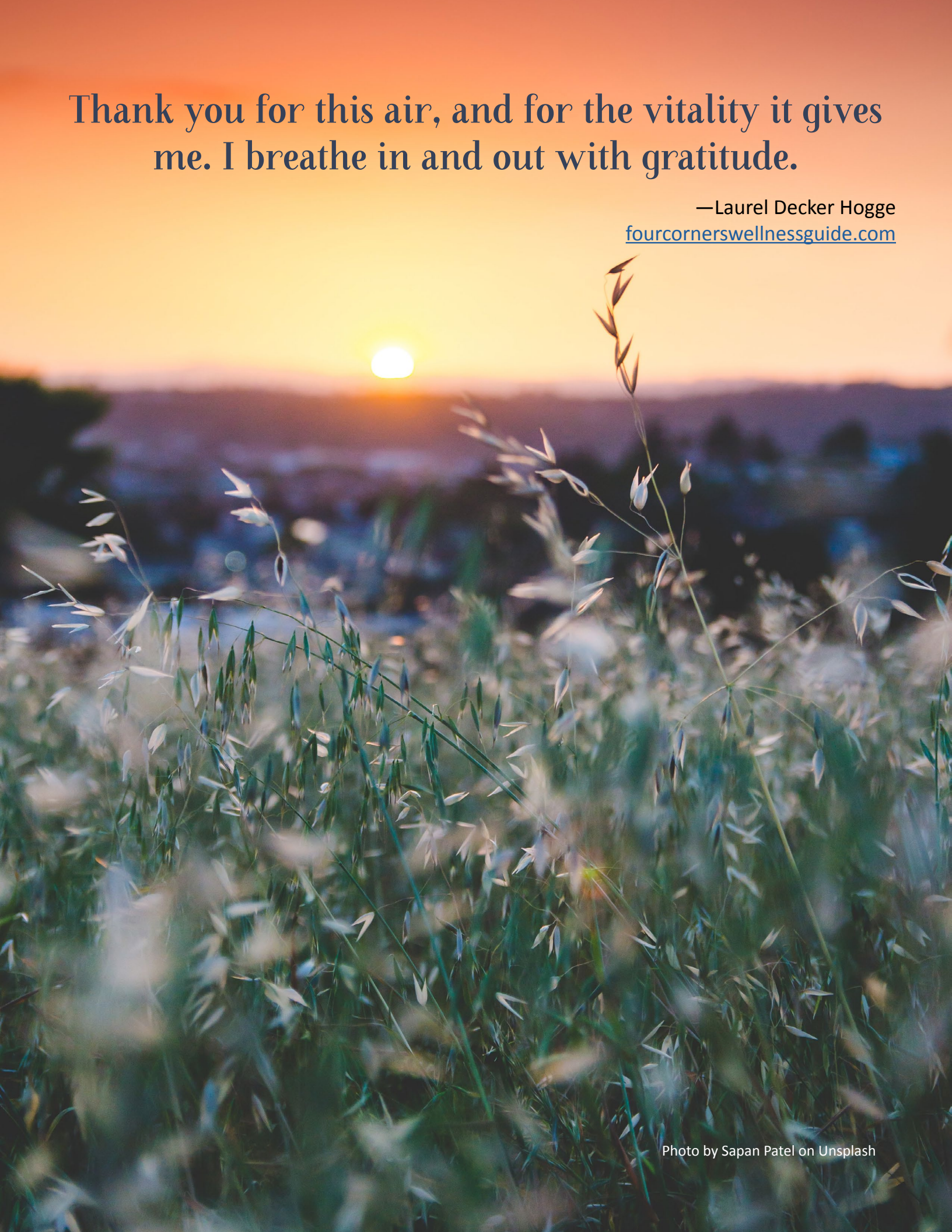
Some feel they are on a long retreat,
surrendering to the change of pace, the
lull that allows, invites
going deeper
into what feels essential.

Activists gear up online
to unmask and denounce the inequities
of health care in certain zip codes,
noting the number of "cases" of
people of color and people in poverty, those
denied clean water with which to wash their hands.
They advocate for prisoners
and detained immigrants who are housed in the
most virulent environments
in a pandemic.

Do-gooders do good:
make masks, grocery shop for others,
gather supplies for hospitals, check
in on neighbors,
pray for the sick,
mourn the dying and dead.

Heroes act heroically in hospitals, call centers
nursing homes, grocery stores
(so many carts to sanitize, so many lives to save).

Whatever our level of felt fear
or underlying anxiety,
all are living with uncertainty
living it out in our own way
each day
as heroically as we are able.


Thank you for this air, and for the vitality it gives me. I breathe in and out with gratitude.
—Laurel Decker Hogge
fourcornerswellnessguide.com
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